291 tract which otherwise suffer severely in an arid climate, even when the ambiant temperature is only moderately high. Thus it is clear that the teguelmoust does have a very real practical value, regardless of what the Tuareg may say; and it is clear also that the men who wear it need it far more than do their womenfolk who go without.

291 ●512 462 It is not true that Tuareg women of the Ahaggar (fig. 48) are exposed to the rigors of their environment either as much or in the same way as are their menfolk. The men are out and about a good deal of the time, riding here and there across the countryside on errands of one sort or another or on long journeys far away, while the women sit quietly in the shelter of their tents, gossiping, telling folk tales, doing fancy leatherwork, and teaching tribal lore and sometimes Tifinagh [11] to the children. Every family that is [567] not miserably poor has at least two or three slaves to fetch and carry water, prepare the meals and do the other daily chores, so that the mistress of a normal Tuareg household in the Ahaggar has no need to take a single step outside her tent except when camp is moved, or to visit with her neighbors and to answer calls of nature.

291 171 Although it is true that Tuareg women do not wear veils, it is also true that women of the other Saharan nomad tribes, Arabs included, seldom if ever wear veils either, except on the very rare occasions when they visit a sedentary settlement or town, and even then not always by any means. But Tuareg and other Saharan nomad women alike all draw a corner of the head shawl (or turban cloth) across the nose and mouth occasionally as a simple matter of physical protection, and this has the same practical effect as putting on a veil does.

291 All this data on the wearing of veils and going without them proves nothing, to be sure, but it does go to show that the Tuareg teguelmoust itself can have had a strictly utilitarian origin after all, as Blanguernon (1955, p. 99) implied, quite apart from the origin of the elaborate and rigid ceremonial quality with which its use has become imbued.

291 177 As for the date at which the teguelmoust

[11] The Tuareg alphabetic script.